

**RESEARCH ARTICLE :**

Knowledge of the farm women regarding the various agricultural activities

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SUMMARY : The international development community has recognized that the agriculture is an engine of growth and poverty reduction in countries where it is the main occupation of the poor. But the agriculture sector in many developing countries is under performing, in part because women, who represent a crucial resource in agriculture and the rural economy through their roles as farmers, laborers and entrepreneurs, almost everywhere face more severe constraints than men in access to productive resources. The knowledge of farm women regarding various agricultural activities was higher namely bird watching, harvesting, intercultural operations and lower in land preparation activities, marketing, post-harvest operations, seed bed preparation and processing activities. The majority (71.50 %) of the respondents had medium level knowledge about the various agricultural activities followed by 25.50 per cent of the respondents had low and 3.00 per cent of the respondents had high level of knowledge.

KEY WORDS:

Farm women,
Agricultural activities,
Knowledge

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The international development community has recognized that the agriculture is an engine of growth and poverty reduction in countries where it is the main occupation of the poor. But the agriculture sector in many developing countries is underperforming, in part because women, who represent a crucial resource in agriculture and the rural economy through their roles as farmers, labourers and entrepreneurs, almost everywhere face more severe constraints than men in access to productive resources. Efforts by national government and the international community to

achieve their goals for agricultural development, economic growth and food security will be strengthened and accelerated if they build on the contributions that women make and take steps to alleviate these constraints.

The prosperity and growth of a nation depends on the status and development of its women, as they not only constitute nearly half of its population, but also positively influence the growth of the remaining half of the population.

Multi-dimensional role of women:

Agriculture :

Sowing, transplanting, weeding, irrigation,

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fertilizer application, plant protection, harvesting, winnowing, storage etc.

Allied activities:

Cattle management, fodder collection, milking, goat rearing, poultry farming, sericulture, sheep rearing, bee keeping etc.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

Ahmednagar and Solapur district of Maharashtra state was purposively selected for the present study due to it has maximum area under agriculture and allied occupation. The ex-post-facto research design was used for the study. This design was considered appropriate because we are studying the phenomenon that has already occurred. It is a systematic empirical study in which the researcher does not have any direct control of independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred. Two tehsil from each district namely Rahuri and Rahata from Ahmednagar district and Malshiras and Pandharpur from Solapur district was selected randomly for present investigation as having maximum area under agriculture and allied occupation. From each selected tehsil. Five villages were selected randomly. Total 20 villages were selected for present study. A sample of 10 farm women from each village, making a total sample of 200 farm women respondents was selected.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results obtained from the present study as well as discussions have been summarized under following heads:

The knowledge of farm women regarding the various agricultural activities:

Knowledge is operationally defined as the awareness gained by the experience of a facts, or facts of knowing about something gained through experience. For studying knowledge of respondents statements were collected by referring relevant literature, personal observation in the fields and informal interview with farm women following participatory methods. Farm women knowledge was studied on the basis of major eight concept areas in agriculture, dairy management practices, goat management practices and poultry management practices.

The opinions of respondents were elicited on three point continuum *i.e.* whether they had complete knowledge, partial knowledge and no knowledge.

The data collected for knowledge of farm women regarding various agricultural activities presented in Table 1.

Land preparation:

In case of land preparation it was revealed that, the majority (74.00 %) of the respondents had partial knowledge about levelling of field, majority (76.50 %) of the respondents had complete knowledge about collection of stubbles whereas 64.50 per cent of the respondents had no knowledge about the manure application. The 84.00 per cent and 83.00 per cent of the farm women had partial knowledge about manure application and pre sowing irrigation, respectively.

Seedbed preparation:

In case of seedbed preparation it was revealed that, the similar percentage *i.e.* 83.00 per cent of the respondents had no knowledge about nursery and partial knowledge about application of fertilizer and manure to seedbed preparation. The 86.00 per cent of farm women had partial knowledge about seed treatment. Under sowing practices 82.50 per cent respondents had complete knowledge about direct sowing, majority (84.50 %) of the respondents had partial knowledge about dibbling whereas 86.50 per cent farm women having partial knowledge of planting operation. Under irrigation practices majority (84.50 %) of farm women had complete knowledge of giving surface irrigation to crops. The similar percentage *i.e.* 87.00 per cent of the respondents had partial knowledge about drip irrigation activities and complete knowledge about water application by zari to different crops.

Intercultural operations:

In case of intercultural operations it was observed that, the 59.60 per cent of respondents had partial knowledge about gap filling followed by 33.50 per cent of the respondents had complete knowledge about gap filling. The 57.50 per cent of respondents had partial knowledge about thinning operation followed by 40.00 per cent of the respondents had complete knowledge about thinning operation. The majority (84.50 %) of the respondents had partial knowledge about fertilizer application whereas 87.00 per cent of the respondents

had complete knowledge of weeding operation.

respondents had partial knowledge and 5.00 per cent of the respondents had no knowledge about bird watching.

Bird watching :

In case of bird watching it was observed that, the 84.50 per cent of respondents had complete knowledge about bird watching followed by 10.50 per cent of the

Harvesting :

In case of harvesting it was revealed that, the 47.00 per cent of the respondents had partial knowledge about

Table 1 : Distribution of the respondents according to the knowledge regarding the various agricultural activities						
Sr. No.	Recommended technology	Complete knowledge	Partial knowledge	No knowledge	Mean score	Rank
	Land preparation				1.11	IV
1.	Leveling of field	27 (13.50)	148 (74.00)	25 (12.50)	1.01	
2.	Collection of stubbles	153 (76.50)	23 (11.50)	24 (12.00)	1.645	
3.	Manure application	13 (06.50)	58 (29.00)	129 (64.50)	0.97	
4.	Manure mixing	13 (06.50)	168 (84.00)	19 (09.50)	0.97	
5.	Pre-sowing irrigation	13 (06.50)	166 (83.00)	21 (10.50)	0.96	
	Seedbed preparation				0.97	VII
1.	Nursery bed preparation	7 (03.50)	27 (13.50)	166 (83.00)	0.205	
2.	Application of fertilizer and manure to seedbed	16 (08.00)	166 (83.00)	18 (09.00)	0.99	
3.	Seed treatment	8 (04.00)	172 (86.00)	20 (10.00)	0.94	
4.	Sowing					
	Direct sowing	165 (82.50)	22 (11.00)	13 (06.50)	1.76	
	Dibbling	9 (04.50)	169 (84.50)	22 (11.00)	0.935	
	Planting	13 (06.50)	173(86.50)	14 (07.00)	0.995	
5.	Irrigation					
	Surface irrigation	169 (84.50)	15 (07.50)	16 (08.00)	0.995	
	Drip irrigation	10 (05.00)	174 (87.00)	16 (08.00)	0.97	
	Water application by zari	174 (87.00)	16 (08.00)	10 (05.00)	0.965	
	Inter cultural operations				1.16	III
1.	Gap filling	67 (33.50)	119 (59.50)	14 (07.00)	0.965	
2.	Thinning	80 (40.00)	115 (57.50)	5 (02.50)	1	
3.	Fertilizer application	14 (07.00)	169 (84.50)	17 (08.50)	0.225	
4.	Weeding	174 (87.00)	16 (08.00)	10 (05.00)	1.82	
	Bird watching	169 (84.50)	21 (10.50)	10 (05.00)	1.795	I
	Harvesting				1.40	II
1.	Cutting of crop	91 (45.50)	94 (47.00)	15 (07.50)	0.98	
2.	Picking of pods/fruit/flower	177 (88.50)	13 (06.50)	10 (05.00)	1.835	
	Post-harvest operation				1.001	VI
1.	Threshing	76 (38.00)	108 (54.00)	16 (08.00)	0.95	
2.	Winnowing	176 (88.00)	18 (09.00)	6 (03.00)	1.85	
3.	Grading	6 (03.00)	25 (12.50)	169 (84.50)	0.185	
4.	Packing/Packaging	13 (06.50)	143 (71.50)	44 (22.00)	0.995	
5.	Storage	18 (09.00)	139 (69.50)	43 (21.50)	1.025	
	Marketing	13 (06.50)	145 (72.50)	42 (21.00)	1.005	V
	Processing	9 (04.50)	12 (06.00)	179 (89.50)	0.15	VIII

cutting of crops followed by 45.50 per cent of the respondents had complete knowledge. The majority (88.50 %) of the farm women had complete knowledge about picking of pods, fruits and flowers.

Post-harvest operations :

In case of post-harvest operations it was observed that, the 54.00 per cent of the respondents had partial knowledge about threshing operation followed by 38.00 per cent of the respondents had complete knowledge. The majority (88.00 %) of the respondents had complete knowledge about winnowing operation whereas the majority (84.50 %) of the respondents had no knowledge about grading practice. The majority (71.50 %) of the respondents had partial knowledge about packaging practice whereas 69.50 per cent of the respondents had partial knowledge about storage activity.

Marketing :

In case of marketing it was observed that, the majority (72.50 %) of the respondents had partial knowledge about marketing followed by 21.00 per cent of the respondents had no knowledge and 6.50 per cent of the respondents had complete knowledge about marketing operation.

Processing :

In case of processing it was observed that, the majority (89.50 %) of the respondents had no knowledge about processing followed by 06.00 per cent of the respondents had partial knowledge and 4.50 per cent of the respondents had complete knowledge about processing operation.

The table indicates that, the knowledge of farm women regarding the various agricultural activities. It may be arranged in descending order as bird watching (1.79), harvesting (1.40), intercultural operations (1.16), land preparations (1.11), marketing (1.005), post-harvest

operations (1.001), seedbed preparation (0.97) and processing (0.15).

It means that, the knowledge of farm women regarding various agricultural activities was higher namely bird watching, harvesting, intercultural operations and lower in land preparation activities, marketing, post-harvest operations, seed bed preparation and processing activities.

Table 2 shows that, the majority (71.50 %) of the respondents had medium level knowledge about the various agricultural activities followed by 25.50 per cent of the respondents had low and 3.00 per cent of the respondents had high level of knowledge. The above findings are in line with those of Awasthi *et al.* (2002); Chaitanya (2004); Wasim *et al.* (2009); Pandey *et al.* (2010); Singh and Srivastava (2012); Mishra (2013); Baba (2010) and Mishra (2013) .

Implications:

– In order to improve women’s work efficiency, Government and Extension worker should plan and execute need based training programmers.

– Make coverage for social security and the legal protection of rural women workforce, particularly women heads of household labour, given women in mentioned region who have participation in agricultural activities and spend a lot of time, but they do not have any support from government agencies.

– Efforts should be made to make the male of our society sufficient open minded to accept the ability of the women in the field of planning and managing in case of farm related activities.

– The findings of this study reported that majority of the respondent farm women had medium level of knowledge about agricultural activities and allied occupation. Therefore, there is an urgent need to provide them sufficient knowledge regarding the agricultural activities and allied occupation by the mean of training given by KVK’S and NGO’S.

Table 2 : Distribution of the respondents according to the level of knowledge of agricultural activities

Sr. No.	Knowledge of agricultural activities	Number of respondents(200)	Percentage
1.	Low (Upto 27)	51	25.50
2.	Medium (28 to 31)	143	71.50
3.	High (32 and above)	06	03.00
	Total	200	100.00
Mean = 29.08		S.D = 2.38	

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